

When a Serious Crime Happens to You



Serious crimes can have physical and emotional effects, even after the crime is over. It is very common to feel:

• Scared • Confused • Frustrated • Angry • Hurt

This pamphlet will answer some common questions and help you get more information if you need it.

What You May be Feeling

You may feel different from day to day, or even at different times in the same day. Sometimes you might have a wide range of emotions within a very short time. These are normal reactions:

Shock and Disbelief

No one ever expects something like this to happen and no one is ever really prepared for it. You may feel shocked that this has really happened to you. Usually people have a feeling of being “emotionally numb” right after the crime happens.

Sense of Violation

You might feel like you have no more privacy or that you can't trust anyone anymore.

Anger and Frustration

It is normal to be angry at the person who did this to you. You might feel frustrated because you aren't able to show or tell the person how you feel. You might also be angry at the police or criminal justice system.

Fear

Many people are frightened that the crime will happen again. You might also be afraid that the criminal will try to get back at you for telling the police what happened.



Suspicion

You might feel that you can't trust strangers or people in your community.

Stress

After a crime, you may feel very stressed. Some people have trouble sleeping or eating, and many people feel very sad.

Guilt

Many people feel like there might have been something that they could have done to prevent the crime. Remember that it is not your fault if someone else breaks the law.

What You Can Do

Crimes can be very frightening and change your life a lot. Remember that what you are feeling is normal, and the feelings will go away. Until then, there are things you can do to make life easier.

- If you've been hurt, go to the health centre or hospital right away.
- Call the police and report the crime.
- Talk to friends and family members about what happened. You might also feel better if you talk to a counsellor.
- If you're scared to stay by yourself, ask someone to stay with you or move in with a friend or family member.
- Remember to eat and try to get lots of sleep. Sometimes exercise can make you feel better and help you deal with stress.
- Ask the police to do a security check on your home and talk with you about how you can protect yourself.
- If the stressful feelings don't go away, talk to your doctor or nurse.



Dealing With the Criminal Justice System

The police will ask you questions about what happened to you. If they find the person who did it, you may have to go to court and tell a judge what happened. This can be confusing and stressful, but there are people who can help you every step of the way.

Call your local victim services worker for help with a victim impact statement, for information about your case or for emotional support in this difficult time:

Fort Good Hope: (867) 598-2247 or (867) 598-2352

Fort Smith: (867) 872-5911

Hay River: (867) 874-7212

Inuvik: (867) 777-5493 or (867) 777-1555

Yellowknife: (867) 920-2978 or (867) 669-1490

Translation is available in your language.

